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**MOLLY JOSEPH WARD, MAYOR**  
22 LINCOLN STREET  
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA 23669

OFFICE FAX: 757-728-3037

May 14, 2009

The Honorable Robert J. Wittman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1318 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-4601

Dear Congressman Wittman:

I write to express to you my strong support for a joint proposal between the City of Poquoson and the City of Hampton to allow for a four-lane cross-section of roadway to connect the two cities. The Wythe Creek Road proposal is a significant regional arterial project connecting southern Poquoson and northern Hampton, and the funding of this request would have significant economic, mobility and environmental benefits for both the City of Hampton and the City of Poquoson.

This project is classified as a regionally significant roadway and is included in the Hampton Roads MPO 2030 Long Range Plan. Wythe Creek Road is primarily a 2-lane undivided roadway carrying approximately 18,000 vehicles per day in the City of Hampton. There are minimum or no roadway shoulders for most of the project length with significant drop-offs on the northern section within Hampton, creating a significant safety hazard. In addition, the Wythe Creek Road corridor is a major connector from the primarily residential areas of Poquoson to the commercial, educational, and employment centers in Hampton, such as Langley Air Force Base, NASA Langley Research Center, Hampton University, and Thomas Nelson Community College and surrounding business parks along Route 134 (Magruder Boulevard). With additional business and educational opportunities impending in the area, especially along Magruder Boulevard, it is even more critical that travelers have ease of access in this corridor.

Further, the existing 2-lane roadway has a level of service of F during the AM and PM peak travel hours. A 4-lane divided roadway with right and left turn storage lanes will result in a significant improvement in peak hour levels of service. Also, Wythe Creek Road serves as one of two primary evacuation routes from the City of Poquoson, a city which frequently experiences flooding during tropical or other weather events. The elevation of Wythe Creek Road in Hampton will be raised as part of this widening project which will ensure Poquoson residents can safely leave their city.

*"Oldest Continuous English-Speaking Settlement in America - 1610"*

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Lastly, morning and afternoon peak hour traffic congestion contribute to stop and go conditions with excessive vehicle idling. Improved capacity will result in free flow conditions resulting in improved environmental air quality.

The City of Hampton will provide for the opportunity for comment on this project during the preliminary engineering and right-of-way acquisition phases by holding public information and public hearings consistent with the requirements established by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I am hopeful that you, too, will enthusiastically support it. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Molly Ward".

Molly Joseph Ward  
Mayor



## **CITY OF POQUOSON**

500 City Hall Avenue, Poquoson, Virginia 23662-1996  
(757)868-3000 Fax (757)868-3101

Office of the Mayor

April 27, 2009

The Honorable Robert J. Wittman  
US House of Representatives  
1123 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Wittman:

I write to express to you our City's strong support for a joint proposal between the City of Poquoson and the City of Hampton to allow for a widened, multi-lane cross-section of roadway to connect the two cities. This proposal, enthusiastically supported by residents, commercial entities, and educational and industrial partners, will allow for critically needed additional access into and out of the city for our citizens.

As you are likely aware, Poquoson's residents depend on only two roads for access into or out of the city. Of particular concern is evacuation of these citizens during large storms when one of the roads out of the city, Wythe Creek Road, is under several feet of salt water, leaving only one other two lane road (SR171) available for use. If SR 171 were to become impassible, Poquoson's 11,500 residents would be completely isolated with no medical or other services except for Fire Department EMT staff. There are no doctors or urgent care facilities in Poquoson, and during a storm, helicopters could not fly into the city, leaving our citizens completely isolated.

Furthermore, many of these residents are employed at Langley AFB, NASA's Langley Research Center, Northrop Grumman Shipyard and in other Hampton Roads communities. Residents also commute to attend educational institutions outside of the city and all commuters face significant traffic congestion at peak travel periods each day. Further, while many of these commuters would use bicycles for transportation, the existing roadway cannot safely support them.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I am hopeful that you, too, will enthusiastically support our joint proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Gordon C. Helsel  
Mayor